(d) Government have drawn up a trade facilitation charter, laying down guidelines, for Indian Missions in countries of major commercial interest to India.

Foreign Minister's America visit

1881. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether he has visited USA in the month of October, this year;

(b) if so, the purpose of the visit and the details of the discussions held, agreements signed between both the countries; and

(c) the extent to which India has been provided with help to counter terrorism in the country?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Minister of External Affairs met the U.S. President, U.S. Secretary of State, U.S. Secretary of Defence, the U.S. National Security Advisor and senior leaders of the U.S. Congress in Washington D.C. In these meetings, the two sides discussed the situation arising out of the terrorist attacks on September 11 in the United States; the problem of terrorism, including India's own concerns with cross-border terrorism; the global campaign against terrorism, including the measures against the Taliban and the Al Qaida network in Afghanistan; and, further development of India-U.S. relations. Minister of External Affairs also visited New York to convey the sympathy and the solidarity of the people of India to the people of New York, including the Indian American community.

(c) On 05 October 2001, the White House Spokesman had stated at a press briefing that President Bush had condemned the terrorist attack in Srinagar on 01 October 2001 and that the President had also said that "terrorism must end everywhere, and that includes in Kashmir". Besides Harkat-ul-Mujahideen, which had been notified by the U.S. State Department as a Foreign Terrorist Organisation, the U.S. Department of Treasury has notified Jaish-e-Mohammad as a

Specially Designated Global Terrorist, along with Harkat-ul-Mujahideen and some other Pakistan-based organisations and individuals.

India and the United States have an ongoing cooperation in combating terrorism through a Joint Working Group on Counter-terrorism. Besides sharing of information and assessment on terrorist groups in this region, the United States provides assistance through anti-terrorism training for law enforcement agencies in India, capacity building for consequence management and support for strengthening institutional structure in the country for combating terrorism. During the visit of Prime Minister to Washington from 7-9 November 2001, the two sides agreed to launch a new initiative on cyber-terrorism. The two countries also coordinate efforts on counter-terrorism initiatives in the United Nations.

Indians stranded on ships in international waters

1882. SHRI ABANI ROY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news item captioned "MEA blissfully ignorant about Indians stranded on high seas" as reported in the Statesman dated the 19th October, 2001;

(b) if so, whether a large number of Indians stranded on ships owned by different companies after US recent terrorism attack;

(c) if so, whether Government have not taken any sincere efforts to ascertain the fate of Indian on ships and stranded in the international waters; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir. The Government has not received any information from our diplomatic Missions abroad about any Indian nationals having been stranded on ships on high seas after the terrorist attacks on USA on September 11, 2001.